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GAMBIT

#12

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JAN



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THIEF
OF
TIME!

REMY LIBERU KNOWS HIS NEXT WORDS WILL HAUNT HIM FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

I NEED YOU.

PINCH ME. I MUST BE DREAMING!

MIGHT TURN OUT T'BE YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE, THERE.

REMY LIBERU HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE OUTSIDER. ORPHANED AT BIRTH, HE WAS ADOPTED BY THE LEGENDARY THIEVES GUILD OF NEW ORLEANS, OFTEN SHUNNED BY HIS PEERS BECAUSE OF HIS STRANGE BURNING RED EYES. EVENTUALLY, HE REALIZED HE IS A MUTANT -- GIFTED AT BIRTH WITH THE ABILITY TO CHARGE INANIMATE OBJECTS WITH BIOKINETIC ENERGY THAT IS EXPLOSIVELY RELEASED! HE'S CHARMING. HE'S DEADLY. **STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE MOST MYSTERIOUS X-MAN OF ALL!**

GAMBIT

The SUNSET DAWN

Book 1: The Time Trap Chapter 1

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OKAY, YOU'RE IN MONACO SNEAKING INTO MY BEDROOM AT THREE IN THE MORNING, AND YOU'RE NOT HERE TO FOOL AROUND?

GO FIGURE, I NEED YOUR HELP.

SEKHEM CONOWAY IS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENGINEER, INDIANA JONES MEETS REED RICHARDS.

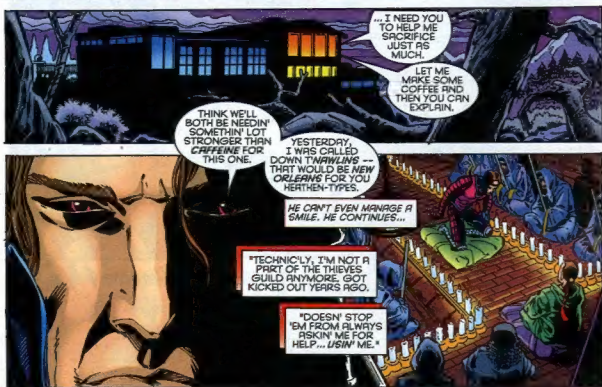
A DICHOTOMY: BRILLIANT AND ADVENTUROUS, BUT ALSO INEXPERIENCED AND SHELTERED.

SHE ALSO THINKS SHE IS IN LOVE WITH THE MYSTERIOUS MAN CALLED GAMBIT...

THOUGHT I JUST DID YOU A MIGHTY BIG FAVOR WITH THE TOMORROW STONE?

YOU SACRIFICED A LOT, SEK... I KNOW... AN' THIS TIME...

SEE THE GAMBIT CYBER CONDO: "THE HUNT FOR THE TOMORROW STONE," AT WWW.MARVEL.COM



... I NEED YOU TO HELP ME SACRIFICE JUST AS MUCH.

LET ME MAKE SOME COFFEE AND THEN YOU CAN EXPLAIN.

THINK WE'LL BOTH BE NEEDIN' SOMETHIN' LOT STRONGER THAN CAFFEINE FOR THIS ONE.

YESTERDAY, I WAS CALLED DOWN T'NAWLINS -- THAT WOULD BE NEW ORLEANS FOR YOU HEATHEN-TYPES.

HE CAN'T EVEN MANAGE A SMILE. HE CONTINUES...

"TECHNIC'LY, I'M NOT A PART OF THE THIEVES GUILD ANYMORE. GOT KICKED OUT YEARS AGO.

"DOESN' STOP 'EM FROM ALWAYS ASKIN' ME FOR HELP... USIN' ME."

"THEY WERE HAVIN' ANOTHER ONE OF THEIR RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES."

"THIS ONE'S CALLED THE REVELATION OF DEADLIFE. TH' PAST IS USED TO SHOW TH' WAY TO TH' FUTURE."

"MY ADOPTIVE POPPA, JEAN LUC, IS TH' CLAN'S PATRIARCH. HE LED TH' CEREMONY. ALSO, OUR TRAITEUR -- OUR HEALER -- TANTIE MATTIE WAS THERE."

"THAT'S WHEN YOU KNOW IT'S IMPORTANT, SINCE SHE'S A PRACTICIN' CATHOLIC AN' ONLY DOES THE GUILD CEREMONIAL GIG WHEN SHE HAS TO..."

OUR TANKS, REMY, FOR HAVIN' ANSWERED OUR CALL.

WE MUST PERFORM DE DEADLIFE BECAUSE OF OUR FAILURE TO OBTAIN DE MOMENTARY PRINCESS.

THE TIME-HOPPING JEWEL FROM CANDID10 -- MARK

TH' PRINCESS WAS A CLOSED WINDOW TO OTHER TIMES -- YOU TOUCHED IT FIFTY YEARS AGO, I TOUCHED IT LAST MONTH.

BOTH OF US LOOKED THROUGH THAT WINDOW -- SAW TH' PAST AN' TH' FUTURE -- BUT WE COULDN' ACTUALLY USE THE JEWEL TO TRAVEL TO THEM.

I KNOW, REMY, BUT WE WERE HOPING IT WOULD HELP EXPLAIN DIS --

A SUITCASE

WHAT IS INSIDE DE SUITCASE -- AND HAS BEEN FOR OVER A HUNDRED YEARS!

QUESTIONS WITH NO ANSWERS, REMY, BUT DE QUESTIONS ALONE WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND --

-- WHY DE GUILD HAD AN INTEREST IN YOU SINCE YOU WAS A BABY.

WHY LE DIABLE BLANC -- THE WHITE DEVIL BORN WITH RED EYES MEANT SO MUCH T' GUILD LORE...

... AN' WHY YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN APART AND A PART OF OUR FAMILY.



HE DIDN'T WANT TO
OPEN IT. DIDN'T WANT
TO KNOW.

HE STOPPED ASKING
HIMSELF THOSE
QUESTIONS SO
LONG AGO...

... BURYING HIS DESIRE
FOR THE ANSWERS DEEP
INSIDE HIS WOUNDED SOUL.

A PHOTOGRAPH?

HIS HEART STARTED
BEATING FASTER.

THE BURIED
WHISPERS IN
HIS SOUL GREW
LOUDER --

-- DEMANDING
HE SCREAM OUT
IN ANGER AND
CONFUSION.

INSTEAD, HIS WORDS
CREAKED OUT LIKE THE
RUSTLE OF DRIED LEAVES...



THIS IS
A PICTURE
OF ME?

BUT --
IT'S AT LEAST
A HUNDRED
YEARS
OLD!

ONE HUNDRED
AND EIGHT.

THE
PICTURE WAS
TAKEN IN 1891.
I WAS A BOY --
MY MEMORIES OF
THE TIME ARE
INCOMPLETE --
FRAGMENTED --

-- AS ARE
SO MANY OF MY
REMEMBRANCES...
PERHAPS DUE TO
MY REPETITIVE
CONTACT WITH
THE MOMENTARY
PRINCESS...

REPETITIVE?

I HELD THE PRINCESS
AGAIN IN THE SEVENTIES...
NICHOLAS FURY AND I
DID ATTEMPT TO RETRIEVE
IT TOGETHER --

-- AS DID STRUCKER,
EMPLOYING AN EGYPTIAN
ARCHAEOLOGIST
NAMED --

ANWAR
ANUBAR.





JEAN LUC STAMMERS
OUT A CONFUSED
REPLY.

ABOUT A
MYSTERIOUS
STRANGER
RESCUING
HIM AS A
LITTLE BOY
IN LONDON.



ABOUT A TRIP TO NEW YORK
ON A BOAT AND A STRUGGLE
UNDER THE STREETS OF
MANHATTAN.

AND ALL THE WHILE,
REMY STARES AT THE
PICTURE, LOOKING
AT A MIRROR IMAGE,
KNOWING THIS WAS
THE FIGURE HE TIME-
TRAVELED.

NOT YOUNGER, NOT OLDER,
RIGHT NOW, AND HE NOTICES
ONE MORE THING ABOUT THE
PICTURE, BUT BEFORE HE CAN
PLACE IT...



-- CALLED ME
OFFERING HIS
ASSISTANCE.

?!

GOOD EVENING, REMY.
I HOPE YOU ARE READY
FOR AN INTERESTING
JOURNEY.

SOMEONE
WHOSE MEMORIES
OF DE TIME ARE
CLEARER DAN
MINE.

THE TITHE
COLLECTOR!

WHO'S
HE?

HE WAS SORT
OF THE GUILD'S BILL
COLLECTOR FOR TH'
LAST HUNDRED YEARS.



HE WORKED FOR CANDRA, BUT NOT ANYMORE, SINCE SHE KICKED.

HE SAID HE KNEW WHAT WAS GONNA HAPPEN 'CAUSE SOMEONE CAME TO HIM IN A DREAM AN' WARNED HIM.

AN OLD LADY NAMED FONTANELLE?

YOU TOOP?



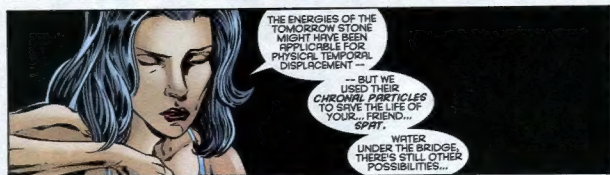
SHE CAME INTO MY DREAMS A FEW MONTHS AGO, RIGHT AFTER WE'D MET.

IF I SURVIVE THIS MESS, ME N' THAT LADY'RE GONNA HAVE A TALK.

SO BASICALLY, YOU CAME TO ME TO HELP YOU FIGURE OUT A WAY TO TRAVEL THROUGH TIME?



FIGURED WHAT WITH ALL YOUR RESEARCH INTO TIME PHYSICS TRY'N T'FIND A WAY TO REVIVE YOUR MOTHER --



THE ENERGIES OF THE TOMORROW STONE MIGHT HAVE BEEN APPLICABLE FOR PHYSICAL TEMPORAL DISPLACEMENT --

-- BUT WE USED THEIR CHRONAL PARTICLES TO SAVE THE LIFE OF YOUR... FRIEND... SPAT.

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE, THERE'S STILL OTHER POSSIBILITIES...



... LIKE FINDING A WARP GATE OR TECHNOLOGY LEFT BEHIND BY THE KREE OR THE SHI'AR.

AND DR. DOOM IS RUMORED TO HAVE A TIME PLATFORM IN HIS CASTLE IN LATVERIA...



WHAT?



JUST SO HAPPENS I KNOW A COUPLE GUYS FROM LATVERIA...



"...AND ANOTHER GUY WHO HAPPENS TO BE A WALKING FODOR'S GUIDEBOOK TO HELP US FIND THEM..."

WASHINGTON, D.C....

JACOB GAVIN, JR. IS AN INTERNATIONAL MESSENGER AND A FACE-CHANGING MUTANT CODE-NAMED COURIER.

HE'S ALSO CONNECTED ALL OVER THE WORLD.

YOU WANT ME TO GO WHERE WITH YOU AND DO WHAT?

INTERNATIONAL
INFONET INC.

GAVIN & SON

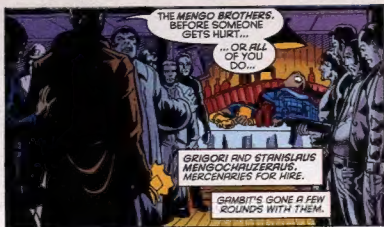
SO, A CAB TO A PLANE TO A HORSE-DRAWN CART LATER...

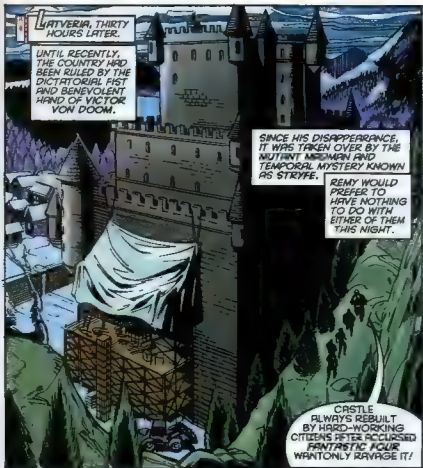
...AND TEAM GAMBIT IS IN AN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY THAT DIDN'T EVEN APPEAR ON A MAP UNTIL THREE MONTHS AGO...

REMY...
HAVE I TOLD YOU IN THE LAST TEN MINUTES HOW MUCH I HATE YOU?



RELAX, JAKE, THIS IS COVERED...





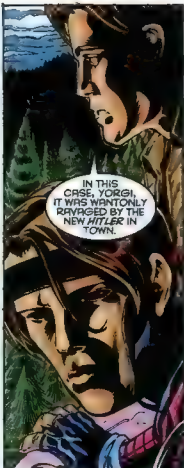
LITVERIA, THIRTY HOURS LATER.

UNTIL RECENTLY, THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN RULED BY THE DICTATORIAL FIST AND BENEVOLENT HAND OF VICTOR VON DOOM.

SINCE HIS DISAPPEARANCE, IT WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE MUTANT MEGAMAN AND TEMPORAL MYSTERY KNOWN AS STRYFE.

REMY WOULD PREFER TO HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH EITHER OF THEM THIS NIGHT.

CASTLE ALWAYS REBUILT BY HARD-WORKING CITIZENS AFTER ACCUSED FANTASTIC FOUR WANTONLY RAVAGE IT!



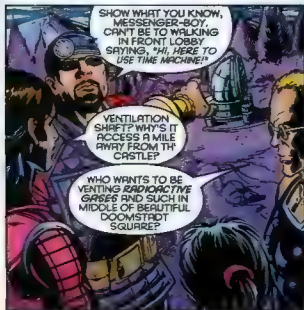
IN THIS CASE, YORGI, IT WAS WANTONLY RAVAGED BY THE NEW HITLER IN TOWN.



NAME NOT YORGI. DOOM NOT "OLD HITLER." GREAT MAN! GREAT LEADER! YOU KNOW NOTHING, PRETTY BOY.

THIS WAY TO BE ENTERING CASTLE.

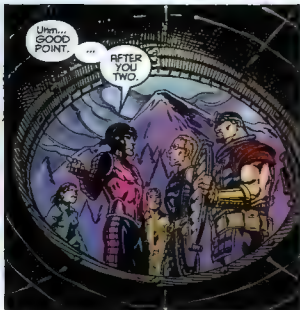
HELLO, COMPASS! YOU'RE LEADING US AWAY FROM THE CASTLE!



SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW, MESSENGER-BOY. CAN'T BE TO WALKING IN FRONT LOBBY SAYING, "HI, HERE TO USE TIME MACHINE!"

VENTILATION SHAFT? WHY'S IT ACCESS A MILE AWAY FROM TH' CASTLE?

WHO WANTS TO BE VENTING RADIOACTIVE GASES AND SUCH IN MIDDLE OF BEAUTIFUL DOOMSTADT SQUARE?



Um... GOOD POINT.

AFTER YOU TWO.

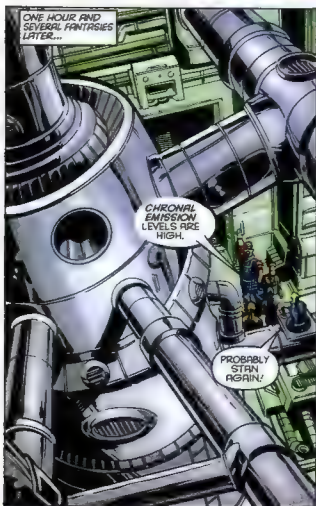


RADIOACTIVE GASES --? THAT WAS YOU LETTING ONE LOOSE!

MUTTON FOR DINNER SORRY

GAMBIT THINKS: I'M THE LEADER OF THE GEEK PATROL. THAT MAKES ME KING GEEK.

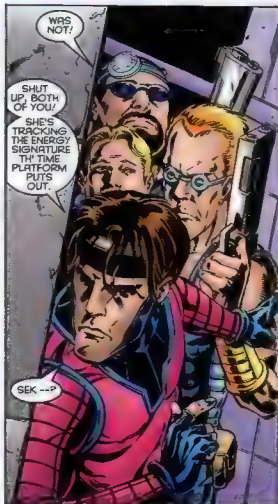
ONLY SMART THING HE'S DONE ALL DAY: LETTING SEK CRAWL IN FRONT OF HIM.



ONE HOUR AND SEVERAL FANTASIES LATER...

CHRONAL EMISSION LEVELS ARE HIGH.

PROBABLY STAN AGAIN!



WAS NOT!

SHUT UP, BOTH OF YOU! SHE'S TRACKING THE ENERGY SIGNATURE TH' TIME PLATFORM PUTS OUT.

SEK --?



THE AMBIENT ATMOSPHERE IS SUFFUSED WITH TEMPORAL PARTICLES... WEAK, BUT EVERYWHERE --

-- MIGHT BE A NATURAL BY-PRODUCT OF THE MACHINE'S PREVIOUS USE.

REMEMBER, I TOLD YOU X-FORCE FILED A MISSION REPORT SAYING THE MACHINE WAS DESTROYED.

WHICH MIGHT ALSO ACCOUNT FOR THE WILD READINGS --



— FOLLOW ME, THE
CONCENTRATION
GETS HEAVIER...

... THIS —

-- WAY?



IS IT
OKAY TO
SCREAM
NOW?



QUICK — BEG
IN LATVERIAN, SO
HE KNOWS YOU'RE
ONE OF HIS
CITIZENS!



DO SVIDENYA!

CIRO!

AND I
THOUGHT
I WAS A
COWARD.



DOOM'S BEEN
MISSIN' SINCE
ONSLAUGHT.

THIS
AIN'
HIM



YEAH, YOU'RE MR. ICE.

THE FACT FIVE OTHER DOOMS SHOWED UP WASN'T ALSO A CLUE?

WACHDOOM

WACHDOOM

HEY, SPOCK ISN'T SUPPOSED TO MAKE FUN OF KIRK IN FRONT OF THE ALIENS!



WHY WOULD STROYFE KEEP DOOMBOTS AROUND?

EGO-STROKE, WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO BE SURROUNDED BY SERVANTS IN THE IMAGE OF THE RULER YOU DEPOSED?

ONLY IF YOU WERE THE RULER!

OH, THAT WAS SMOOTH. THIS WAY!



WE'RE GOIN' HAVE FIRE ON OUR TRAILS IN A MINUTE.

YOU SOUNDED LIKE MARTY FELDMAN IN "YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN."

MAIN TEMPORAL LABORATORY IS THIS WAY.

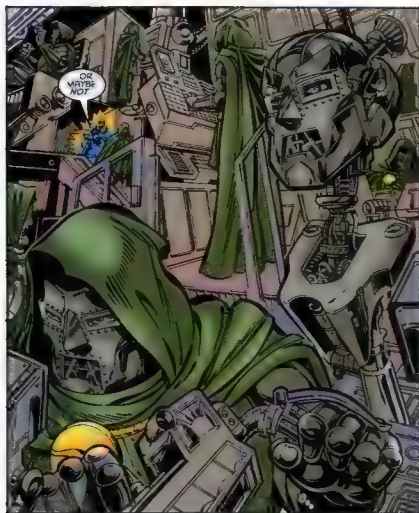
Huh?



Oh, PLEASE, WILL YOU GUYS SHUT UP!

YOU'RE MAKIN' ME WANT TO TRAVEL THROUGH TIME TO CERTAIN DEATH!

OKAY, LET'S GET READY TO MOVE...



OR
WAYBE
NOT



LONG WAY
AROUND IS
RISKIER.

THAN
WALKING
THROUGH A
ROOM FULL
OF ROBOT
GUARDS?

I'M A
CSGRACE
T H
GUARD

BUCK UP, CAPTAIN. I'M
STILL TRACKING THE
CHRONAL
PARTICLES



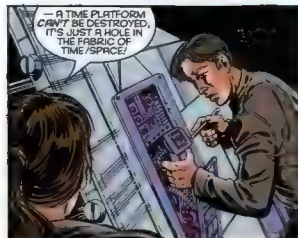
SPOCK NEVER
SAID, "BUCK
UP"

IN
HERE ---?

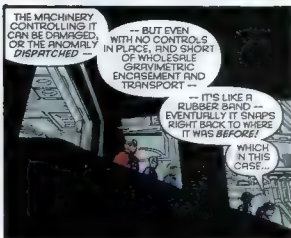
AYE-AYE, SIR. THE
EMISSIONS ARE
FLOODING THE
CHAMBER INSIDE.

I BEEN TRUSTIN'
YOU THIS WHOLE RIDE,
SEK -- THIS MIGHT HAVE
BEEN A GIANT WASTE OF TIME!

AND I TOLD
YOU AFTER YOU
TOLD ME ABOUT THAT
X-FORCE REPORT --



-- A TIME PLATFORM
CAN'T BE DESTROYED.
IT'S JUST A HOLE IN
THE FABRIC OF
TIME/SPACE!

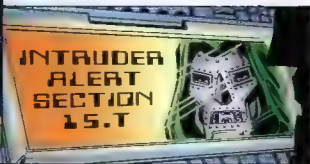


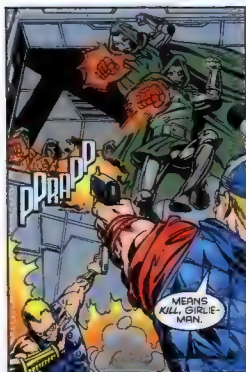
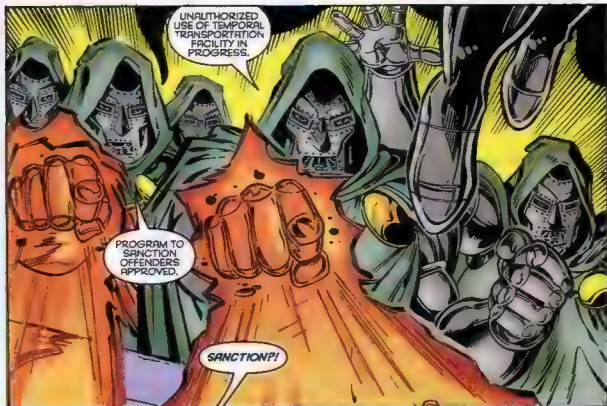
THE MACHINERY
CONTROLLING IT
CAN BE DAMAGED,
OR THE ANOMALY
DISPATCHED --

-- BUT EVEN
WITH NO CONTROLS
IN PLACE, AND SHORT
OF WHOLESAL
GRAVIMETRIC
ENCASEMENT AND
TRANSPORT --

-- IT'S LIKE A
RUBBER BAND --
EVENTUALLY IT SNAPS
RIGHT BACK TO WHERE
IT WAS BEFORE!

WHICH
IN THIS
CASE...

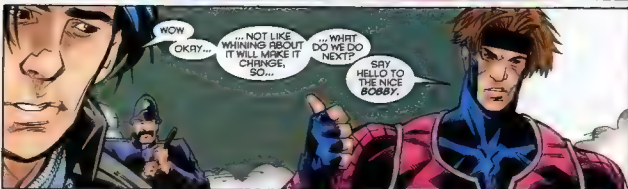




Chapter 2: It Takes a Thief (or perhaps a Dozen)

Kaare Andrews
art

special thanks to International Man of Mystery,
Sven Larsen, for reference help!





IN THAT CASE, JUST ADD THIS TO TH' PINK ELEPHANTS YOU'LL REMEMBER COME MORNIN'!

REMY'S MUTANT POWER: TO CHARGE THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF AN OBJECT, CREATING A KINETIC CASCADE THAT REQUIRES RELEASE.

OR IN ENGLISH: TO LIGHT THE FUSE, THROW THE BOMB AND BLOW THINGS UP



BETTER THAN MY PLAN, I GUESS.

WHICH WAS?



TO TELL HIM "MY FRIEND GOT HIS HEAD CAUGHT IN THE RICE-PICKER."

WHO'S MORE THE GEEK -- YOU FOR QUOTIN' STAR TREK OR ME FOR GETTIN' IT?

DEFINITELY WOULD BE YOU.



FOURTEEN BLOCKS AND FIVE MINUTES LATER

AND AGAIN: WHAT NEXT?

HAVE'TA FIND OUT WHERE TH' GUILD IS OPERATIN'. LONDON'S A BIG CITY.

I GUESS THEY WOULDN'T BE IN THE YELLOW PAGES UNDER "THIEVES," HUH?

ARE THERE EVEN YELLOW PAGES IN 1891?

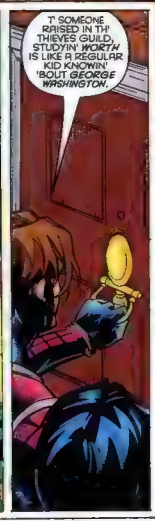
T' CATCH A THIEF, USE A THIEF.

ONE OF TH' BEST IN ALL OF HISTORY LIVED -- LIVES RIGHT HERE.

ADAM WORTH WAS AN AMERICAN LIVING IN LONDON UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME.

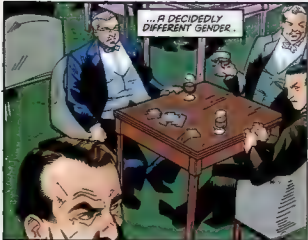
BANK ROBBER ART THIEF, YOU NAME IT, HE DID IT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?



T' SOMEONE RAISED IN TH' THIEVES GUILD, STUDYIN' WORTH IS LIKE A REGULAR KID KNOWIN' 'BOUT GEORGE WASHINGTON.





BULLPEN BULLETINS

AVAILABLE DECEMBER 8TH

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

In the aftermath of last month's shock ending, Mattie Franklin seeks out her friend Peter Parker. But little does our young hero know that she's being pursued by Julia Carpenter, the former Spider-Woman, and the daughter of Madame Web! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN BYRNE!

AVENGERS UNITED

Continuing the all-new adventures set in the continuity of the new Fox Kids cartoon! While pursuing the villainous Black Knight, the Avengers violate the borders of Latveria—which angers its supreme monarch, Doctor Doom! By TY TEMPLETON and DEREK AUCTION!

BLACK PANTHER

Look out! It's an official stop on the Hulk Smash World Tour! As the walls of his kingdom crumble around him, Black Panther leaps into the crushing grip of the most dangerous monster known to man: the incredible Hulk! By CHRISTOPHER PRIEST and SAL VELLUTO!

BLADE: VAMPIRE HUNTER

Is Blade both a vampire and a member of the secret sect called Silvereye? Our hero thinks so! But does this bizarre turn of events play into the hands of the awakening fiend known as the Reaper... or is the disoriented Blade now more of a wild card than ever before? By BART SEARS and BART SEARS!

DEATHLOCK

Trying to piece together what humanity remains for Jack Truman, Deathlock reunites with his estranged sister. But the family reunion is anything but sweet when the Serpent Society strikes! By JOE CASEY and ERIC CANETE!

GENERATION X

Seeking out some holiday time with his daughter, Banshee visits Stryn—who's been quite busy since she's lost her powers. But when Sean comes to town, he finds himself with more of a family reunion than he bargained for when he encounters both Black Tom Cassidy and the Juggernaut! By JAY FAERBER and TERRY DODSON!

IRON MAN

It's the double-sized action-packed conclusion to the Ultimo saga! By KURT BUSIEK & ROGER STERN and SEAN CHEN & BOB LAYTON!

MULAN X

Cyclops is back! But even in the world of MUTANT X, Scott and Havok can't get together without trouble brewing! With anti-mutant feelings swelling, the Living Pharaoh taps the power of the mutant brothers—and catapults the Summers siblings into a conflict larger than even they could imagine! By HOWARD MACKIE and CARY NORD!

NEW WARRIORS

The all-new threat of Biohazard ravages the New Warriors! Not to worry, Generation X has arrived to save the day! But what if our heroes don't want to be saved? By JAY FAERBER and KARL KERSCHER!

SPIDER-GEL

Peter is desperate to save his daughter from the clutches of the man called Kaine, but May doesn't want her father to interfere... especially when he becomes the web-slinger again! By TOM DEFALCO and PAT OLLIFFE!

X-MEN: PHOENIX

Two millennia in the future, the immortal Apocalypse has remade the Earth in his twisted image! Only one hope remains... a hero who has brought the dream of the X-Men with her from the distant past: Phoenix! By JOHN FRANCIS MOORE and PASCAL ALIXE!

X-MEN: YEAR IN REVIEW

In the style and format of ENCYCLOPEDIA DEADPOOLICA, this compilation gives readers the lowdown on the last year of mutant madness!

H. Lots a letters today, so let's see how fast we can go from zero to sixty —

It's time to set the fears of Dave A. Woodrum of Cincinnati, OH to rest. He asks...

"Can Magneto's magnetic powers affect the 'mystic Uru metal' of Thor's hammer?"

Fraid not, Davey. You see, Thor's hammer isn't made of mystic Uru metal because Uru isn't metal; it's an element that doesn't conform to any Earthly classification. I can't tell you what kind of element it is, because that would mean breaking my promise to Odin.

H. Here's a real unusual query from Pedro Angosto of Villarrobledo, Spain...

"Imagine an 'Alternate World' where you left Marvel for DC in the late 1950's and took the place of editorial great, Julius Schwartz. How do you think DC's then new crop of Silver Age superheroes might have changed under your 'reign'?"

Hey, that's a lot to imagine, Pedro. You know I'd never leave Marvel (cause I've got such a great parking space), but if I had edited my pal Julius Schwartz's mags at that time, chances are some of his heroes would have had weak hearts, elderly aunts, green skin, mutant problems, blindness and villains whose names began with Doc or Doctor. In fact, the more I think of it, it's lucky that good ol' Julius was there to protect DC from all the problems and infirmities that I'd probably have inflicted on them.

C. Iris Alston of Canton, NY is one guy who's real mindful of his manners. Want proof?

"Not to be rude, but how old are you? Oh, and please write at least one more Marvel comic for my generation of fans."

STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hey, Chris, you didn't tell me your age, either, so I don't know what generation you're referring to. I'd like nothing better than to write another comic, but I figure I've written so many it's only fair to give the younger guys a shot at it. However, if the Bullpen gang reads your letter and takes the hint, it would be hard for me to say no. As for my age, don't believe everything you hear. It's definitely not true that I'm the guy who sold Noah his ark. Heck, everyone knows I only lent it to 'im!

O. Our last letter is from a guy who didn't sign his last name, or maybe it is his last name and he didn't sign his first name! Anyway, Ren of Ontario, Canada begs to inquire...

"Where did you come up with the idea for The Inhumans? They're totally unique!"

While searching for a new idea, I remembered that we had done tales of all kinds of super-powered humans, and then it hit me — why not try Inhumans? Jack Kirby and I had a ball dreaming up Karnak, Gorgon, Triforce, Lockjaw, Medusa and the others. Of course, my all-time favorite was Black Bolt... cause it was so easy to write his dialogue!

A. And comicdom's all-time favorite e-mail address, of course, is stan@marvel.com while our legendary mailing address is still Soapbox, Marvel, 387 Park Ave S, NY NY 10016. So stay with it, Bunkle — what's a little writer's cramp compared to a possible No-Prize?

Excelsior!

Stan

Stan Lee



This month the FANTASTIC FORUM is really grooving in a new style!

12:00 to 1:00 PM ET

GAMBIT and upcoming THUNDERBOLTS writer — Fabian Nicieza!

12:00 to 1:00 PM ET

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST CHAT with Writers KURT BUSIEK and Editor TOM BREVDORT!

12:00 to 1:00 PM ET

DEADPOOL writer — JIM KELLY!

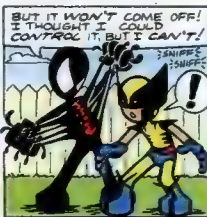
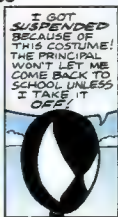
12:00 to 1:00 PM ET

SLINGERS and BISHOP writer HARRIS!

ADL Keyword: Marvel

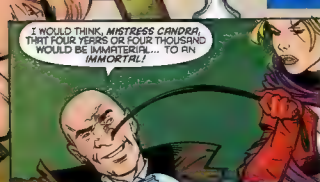
All chat sessions are subject to change/cancellation

BULLPEN BITS #30



BY CHRIS GIARRUSSO





I WOULD THINK, MISTRESS CANDRA, THAT FOUR YEARS OR FOUR THOUSAND WOULD BE IMMATERIAL... TO AN IMMORTAL!



AND THAT BY NOW, YOU WOULD HAVE MORE FAITH IN THE SKILLS OF YOUR TITHE COLLECTOR!

Eh?

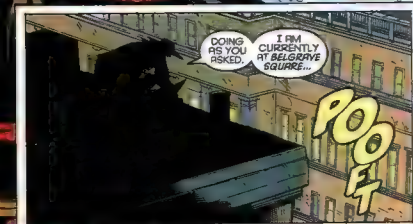


A PROJECTION OF YOURSELF? WHOSE TANGIBILITY REMAINS THE PROVINCE OF YOUR DISCRETION?

DISCREET BEING A WORD ILL-EQUIPPED TO DESCRIBE YOU RIGHT NOW, MISTRESS.

YOU HAVE CREATED AN ALIBI FOR YOURSELF?

HOW VERY DELICIOUS! WHERE ARE YOU REALLY RIGHT NOW?



DOING AS YOU ASKED.

I AM CURRENTLY AT BELGRAVE SQUARE...

POOF



...AWAITING DEAR JACQUES AND HIS MERRY BAND OF THIEVES TO SPRING INTO ACTION...

Frog

PEFFTT

CHANK

WHAT DID
YOU CALL THAT
AGAIN?

PNEUMATICS.

SHOULD
SAVE SOME WEAR
AND TEAR ON OUR
SHOULDERS.

OR
NOT.

THE MANUFACTURED
FOG WILL ONLY LAST
A FEW MINUTES,
JACQUES.

MORE THAN
ENOUGH TIME,
ROULER --

-- TO PICK THIS
TERRACE
LOOK!

REDUCED TO THIS,
ARE WE, JACQUES
LEBERU?

PETTY LARCENY
AS A DESPERATE
MEANS TO ALLEVIATE
THE DEBT OWED YOUR
BENEFACTRESS?

THE
EXPECTATION WAS,
TITHE COLLECTOR,
THAT THERE WOULD
BE NOTHING PETTY
ABOUT IT.

YOU WILL
NOT MAKE UP FOR
YOUR FAILURE TO
OBTAIN THE PRINCESS --
NOR ESPECIALLY THE
CALLOUS DISREGARD
DISPLAYED --

-- OF
MAKING SUCH
AN IMPORTANT
PURCHASE THE
PROVINCE OF
YOUR SON JEAN
LUC'S TILLING
RITUAL --

-- BY
HOPING CANDRA
WILL BE APPASED
WITH TRINKETS AND
BAUBLES:

THE GEM IS GONE. WE FAILED.
WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT. HAS THE
BENEFACTRESS NOT PUNISHED
US ENOUGH FOR THAT BY
NOW?

SHE HAS WITHHELD
THE ELIXIR THAT
GIVES US LONG
LIFE.

WE HAVE
AGED TWICE
AS QUICKLY IN
THE LAST FOUR
YEARS!

SHE HAS HELD MY SON --
AND THAT OF MY HARVEST
MASTER -- RANSOM FOR
THE LAST TEN MONTHS!

AND YOU
HAVE PROVIDED US NO
GUIDANCE IN HOW TO
BALANCE OUR ACCOUNT
WITH HER!

ALL
WE CAN DO
IS CONTINUE TO
FEED HER THE BEST
AVAILABLE MORSELS
FOR HER PLATE AND
HOPE SHE WILL
EVENTUALLY BE
SATIATED!

Hmmmm... THEREIN LIES THE
PROBLEM, CLAN PATRIARCH,
FOR MISTRESS CANDRA
FINDS TODAY RATHER
BLAND.

AND SINCE SHE
KNOWS ALL THERE
IS TO KNOW ABOUT
YESTERDAY... THAT
ALLOWS FOR ONLY
ONE OTHER
OPTION --

-- THE VERY
REASON SHE SOUGHT
THE MOMENTARY
PRINCESS TO BEGIN
WITH -- SO AS TO
OBTAIN A TASTE OF
TOMORROW!

AND
WHERE CAN I
FIND THE RECIPE
TO APPASE HER
PALATE?

THE MILBURY HOUSE OUTSIDE OF LONDON HAS BEEN ABANDONED.

WHISPERED TALES OF WAILING GHOSTS AND BLOOD-DRENCHED SOIL --

-- HAVE SENT POTENTIAL BUYERS FLEEING WITH WHAT WILL ONE DAY BE SCIENTIFICALLY CALLED THE "HEEBIE-JEEBIES."

BUT GHOSTS DON'T BOTHER MEN LIKE REMY LEBEAU AND ADAM WORTH.

THEY HAVE TOO MANY SKELETONS IN THEIR OWN CLOSETS FOR ANY ONE ELSE'S TO SCARE THEM...

HOW CERTAIN CAN YOU BE OF THIS, REMY?

DAYS OF TRACKIN' DOWN CLUES, ADAM

THIS GUILD HAS THE AUDACITY TO USE THEIR REAL NAMES WHEN BOOKING TRAVEL?

THAT PLUS TH' TRAIN TICKETS PURCHASED BY A BUNCH OF VERY FAMILIAR NAMES

NOW, WE HAVE A SYSTEM FOR COMBINING BIBLICAL NAMES BASED ON THE MONTH OF THE YEAR, THE PART OF THE GLOBE WE'RE ON, BUNCH OF OTHER STUFF.

ALMOST HAD AN ANEURYSM FIGURING OUT WHAT THOSE CODES WOULD BE IN 1891, BUT I DID IT -- AN' I'M SURE TH' GUILD IS HERE.

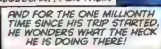
Um... HOW MUCH ABOUT YOU SHOULD I NOT KNOW, REMY?

ENOUGH T' KEEP YOU CURIOUS

... NOT ENOUGH T' DRIVE YOU CRAZY.

Heh. Hm... THEY'VE BEEN HERE, RECENTLY.

HOW CAN YOU TELL?



CHUN
CHUN
CHUN
CHUN

WHY
ARE YOU
DOING THIS
TO US?

STAY
CALM,
BELIZE

-- PANICKING
ONLY MAKES HER
HAPPY!

JEAN LUC LOBEAU AND BELIZE
MARCEAUX HAVE BEEN ENSLAVED
BY CANDRA FOR MONTHS.

FOR THE MOST PART, LACK
OF FREEDOM ASIDE, IT
HASN'T BEEN AN ALTOGETHER
HORRENDOUS EXPERIENCE.

THE "BATHE ME NOW,
ATTENDANTS," PART
HAD ITS UPSIDES.

THE "I'M REALLY, REALLY MAD
AND I'M GOING TO TAKE IT
OUT ON YOU TWO," ASPECT
WOULD FALL UNDER THE
DOWNSIDE CATEGORY.

OH,
VERY
WELL...

ON

CRIEEEEK

OFF



pheww

FORGIVE
ME, BOYS,
FOR ALL THE
DRAMA.



BUT I AM
RATHER UPSET
WITH YOUR FATHERS
AND NEEDED SOME
VISIBLE OUTLET
THROUGH WHICH
TO VENT MY
FRUSTRATIONS!

BUT OF
COURSE, YOU
DID.



I MEAN, AFTER ALL, THE ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GUILD AND ITS BENEFACTRESS HAS BEEN SO...

... MATURE.

YOU ARE SASSY, JEAN LUC. EVER THE OPTIMISTIC CYNIC. I LIKE THAT ABOUT YOU.

BUT YOU ARE ALSO VERY YOUNG AND STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND THE WAYS OF ADULTS — MUCH LESS IMMORTALS.

ENLIGHTEN ME.

THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE WALKED THIS EARTH A LONG, LONG TIME.

EXTERNALS WITH MUCH MORE DANGEROUS AGENDAS THAN OTHERS.

MY OWN HAS BEEN RATHER PEACEFUL IN COMPARISON — KNOWLEDGE, SO AS TO BREED POWER, SO AS TO ENSURE MY CONTINUED SURVIVAL

A RATHER SELF-SERVING WAY TO LIVE FOREVER?

I HAVE NOT UNDOULY HURT OTHERS, SO PREFER OTHERS NOT TO HURT ME.

WHEN I LEARNED OF THE OLD KINGDOM AND CLAN LABEAU'S OBSSIVE ZEALOTRY TOWARDS RECOVERING ITS ANCIENT LORE

— I SAW A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL OPPORTUNITY.

THE NEW ORLEANS GUILD COULD HELP ME. I WOULD PROVIDE THE ASSASSINS WITH POWER ENOUGH TO PROTECT ME —



— SHOULD ANY OF MY IMMORTAL BRETHREN INTEND ME HARM —

— AND THE THIEVES WOULD RECEIVE LONG-LIFE SO AS TO EXTEND THEIR ABILITY TO DIVINE AND RESURRECT THE OLD KINGDOM.


BUT — JEAN LUC AND I DON'T EVEN BELIEVE IN ALL THAT MYSTICISM!

AH, LITTLE BELIZE, YOU WILL HAVE TO LEARN TO BELIEVE IN IT — UNDERSTAND IT — AND BECOME IT...



... NOT SOLELY FOR MY SAKE OR THAT OF OUR PACT — BUT ONE DAY, FOR THE VERY FATE OF THE ENTIRE WORLD!

AND WITH THOSE WORDS, BENEFACTRESS —



YOU SPEAK
MORE ELOQUENTLY
TOWARDS WHY THE
PACT MUST BE
RESTORED -- FOR
BOTH OUR
SINNES!

WITHOUT
YOUR
GUIDANCE, WE
WILL NEVER
ACHIEVE OUR
GOALS.

WITHOUT THE
KNOWLEDGE WE
SEEK, YOU SHALL
NEVER ACHIEVE
YOURS.

PERHAPS
THIS WILL HEAL
THE OPEN
WOUND THAT HAS
BEEN FESTERING
BETWEEN US FOR
THE LAST FOUR
YEARS!



A CHANCE
TO CONTROL
TOMORROW.



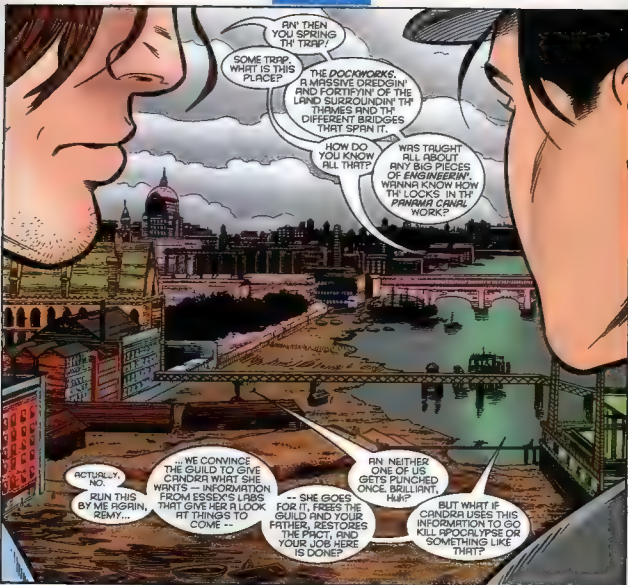
AND WHAT
IS THIS YOU
BRING ME,
JACQUES?



OUTSIDE...

ARE YOU
SURE THIS
WAS A GOOD
IDEA?

MOUSE
WANTS
CHEESE, YOU
GIVE IT
CHEESE



AN' THEN YOU SPRING TH' TRAP!

SOME TRAP. WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

THE DOCKWORKS, A MASSIVE DREDGIN' AND FORTIFYIN' OF THE LAND SURROUNDIN' TH' THAMES AND TH' DIFFERENT BRIDGES THAT SPAN IT.

HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THAT?

WAS TAUGHT ALL ABOUT ANY BIG PIECES OF ENGINEERIN'. WANNA KNOW HOW TH' LOCKS IN TH' PANAMA CANAL WORK?

ACTUALLY, NO.

RUN THIS BY ME AGAIN, REMY...

... WE CONVINCE THE GUILD TO GIVE CANDRA WHAT SHE WANTS -- INFORMATION FROM ESSEX'S LABS THAT GIVE HER A LOOK AT THINGS TO COME --

-- SHE GOES FOR IT, FREES THE GUILD AND YOUR FATHER, RESTORES THE PACT, AND YOUR JOB HERE IS DONE?

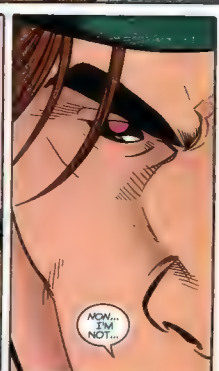
AN' NEITHER ONE OF US GETS PUNCHED ONCE, BRILLIANT, HUH?

BUT WHAT IF CANDRA USES THIS INFORMATION TO GO KILL APOCALYPSE OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?



TIME TRAVEL 101. SHE DIDN', 'CAUSE HE WASN' DEAD IN OUR PAST!

YOU'RE THAT SURE ABOUT THE TIME PHYSICS OF ALL THIS STUFF?



NOW... I'M NOT...



Chapter 3: Cards on the Table (and a Few up the Sleeve!) ♦ Charles Adlard art





I APOLOGIZE FOR SUCH BRUSQUE A TREATMENT, BUT I HAVE NEITHER THE TIME NOR THE INCLINATION TO HUMOR YOUR CHARADE.

A TOUCH AND A WHISPERED SPELL OF FAMILIAL ALIGNMENT FORCES COURIER'S BODY TO FLOW LIKE LIQUID --

-- THE MORPHED DISGUISE OF THE BOBBY REVERTS BACK TO ITS PREVIOUS STATE --

-- IN A RATHER SPECTACULAR AND PAINFUL FASHION!

AND THE TITHE COLLECTOR CONTINUES ON HIS WAY...





WHILE BELOW
THE DOCKWORKS
CONSTRUCTION
SITE...

CANDRA, THIS IS
RIDICULOUS!

WE FINALLY
MAKE UP FOR THE
LOSS OF THE MOMENTARY
PRINCESS -- AN' YOU'RE
REJECTIN' IT?



HOW DARE
YOU TALK TO
ME IN SUCH A
FASHION,
BOY?

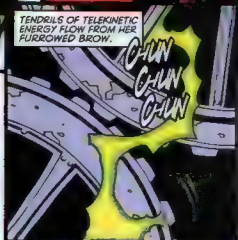
YOU HAVE
NO IDEA OF THE
SECRETS YOUR
FATHER BROUGHT
HERE THIS
NIGHT!

NO
IDEA OF THE
POWER
YOU PLAY
WITH!



WHAT GOOD DOES
THIS TEXT DO ME?
A DOWRY WHOSE
PAYMENT WOULD
REQUIRE I RISK
MY VERY LIFE TO
ATTAIN IT?

NO,
THANK
YOU!



TENDRILS OF TELEKINETIC
ENERGY FLOW FROM HER
FURROWED BROW.

CLUN
CLUN
CLUN



YOUR ENTIRE
DESPERATE
CLAN OF
ZEALOTS ARE
FOOLS!

FOR A TIME,
YOU PROVIDED
SPORT AND AN
OPPORTUNITY FOR
UNPRECEDENTED
POWER, BUT I SEE
THAT IS NOT
MEANT TO
BE.

YOU DIE
TODAY, AS THE
NEW CENTURY
DAWNS, OTHER
THINGS WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY
INTEREST
ME...



GUGGUG

SHUNK

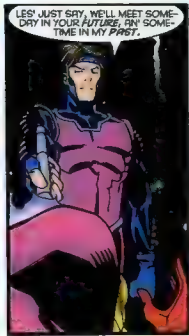
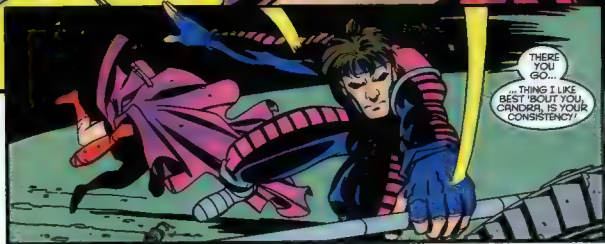
THE KINETICALLY CHARGED BO STAFF
EXPLODES --

-- A CHAIN REACTION
TOPPLES THE MASSIVE
GEARS THAT HOLD
JEAN LUC AND BELIZE --

-- THE SMOKE, DUST,
NOISE AND GENERAL
MAYHEM PROVIDES THE
PERFECT OPPORTUNITY --

-- FOR GAMBIT TO
MAKE A DRAMATIC
ENTRANCE.





BOREDOM? I
HAVEN'T THE
FAINTEST IDEA
WHAT YOU
MEAN.

THE MATTERS AT
HAND HAVE
LIFE AND DEATH
CONSEQUENCES!

YOUR OWN,
RIGHT?

AND QUITE
POSSIBLY THAT
OF EVERY MAN,
WOMAN AND
CHILD ON THIS
EARTH!

REMY HESITATES. SHE'S
SINCERE. THE CANDRA
HE KNEW IN THE FUTURE
COULD HAVE CARED LESS.

WHAT HAPPENED TO
CHANGE HER? WAS
IT BOREDOM — OR
SOMETHING ELSE?

BENEFACTRESS,
LE DIABLE BLANC
PUT US UP TO
THIS!

HE SAID
YOU WOULD BE
INTERESTED IN THE
INFORMATION
WE BROUGHT!

YOUR OWN
TITHE COLLECTOR
TOLD US YOU WANTED
KNOWLEDGE OF
TIMES TO COME.

DID
HE?

I DID.

I SOUGHT TO
FIND A WAY TO REMOVE
THE STRAIN OF DEBT FROM
THE NEW ORLEANS
GUILD —

-- SO THAT
WE COULD RETURN
TO THE WAYS OF THE
PACT AND THE TITHING
COLLECTION.

THE
GENTLEMEN'S CLUB
YOU WORKED FOR
PROVIDED ME MUCH
IN THE WAY OF
INFORMATION...

... INCLUDING
LEGENDS OF A
MAD DOCTOR NAMED
ESSEX WHOSE FACE
HAD TURNED A GHOSTLY
PALE FOR DARING TO SEEK
THE SECRETS OF DIVINITY.

HE LEFT LONDON DECADES AGO
AFTER HAVING ALLEGEDLY
FAILED TO APPROPRIATE
THE POWER OF AN
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN
WARLORD.

SOUND
FAMILIAR?

I KNEW THE MOMENT I WAS SHOWN THIS TEXT THAT IT DISPLAYED THE GESTATION CHAMBER OF THE EGYPTIAN IMMORTAL, EN SABAH NUR.



I AM NOT PREPARED TO CONFRONT HIM, THE COLLECTOR.

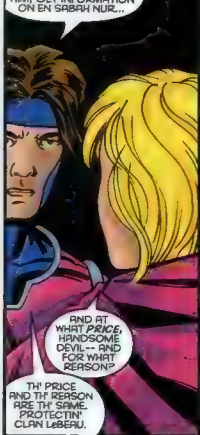
WHO SAID YOU HAD TO DO ANYTHING OF THE SORT, MISTRESS?



I KNOW WHERE DOCTOR ESSEX IS. I'LL GO TO HIM, GET INFORMATION ON EN SABAH NUR...

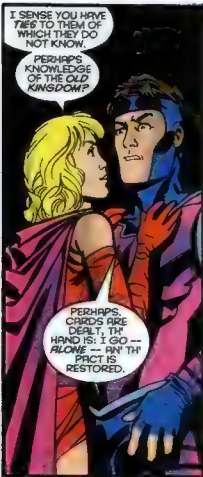
AND AT WHAT PRICE, HANDSOME DEVIL-- AND FOR WHAT REASON?

TH' PRICE AND TH' REASON ARE TH' SAME. PROTECTIN' CLAN LEBEAU.



I SENSE YOU HAVE TIES TO THEM OF WHICH THEY DO NOT KNOW.

PERHAPS KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD KINGDOM?



PERHAPS, CARDS ARE DEALT, TH' HAND IS: I GO -- ALONE -- AN' TH' PACT IS RESTORED.

WE HAVE NO NEED OF THE WHITE DEVIL TO PROTECT US!

WE ARE CLAN LEBEAU OF THE THIEVES GUILD! OUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ARE AS OLD AS TIME ITSELF!



THIS AIN' 'BOUT EGO -- YOU DON' KNOW WHAT SHE CAN --

AFTER HE TOLD US WHAT TO TAKE FROM MILBURY HOUSE, WE PROCEEDED TO GATHER MORE INFORMATION.

WE KNOW WHERE ESSEX WENT -- TO NEW YORK CITY -- THEREFORE, WE HAVE NO NEED OF HIS MEDDLESOME INTERFERENCE!



YOU KNOW TOO MUCH AND TELL TOO LITTLE, STRANGER.

A SOUND GAMBIT TO PLAY, WERE YOU NOT PLAYING AGAINST AN OPPONENT...

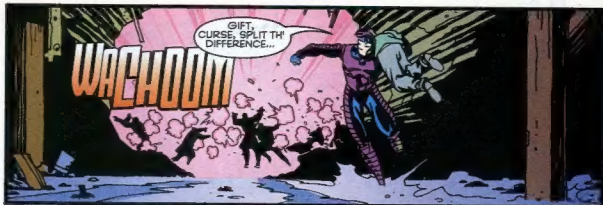
... WITH BETTER CARDS IN HER HAND THAN YOU.

CONSIDER THE RETURN OF BELIZE MARCEAUX A GESTURE OF GOOD FAITH.

I'D SUGGEST YOU GO TO NEW YORK CITY SOON... AND UPON A SUCCESSFUL RETURN, YOUR SON WILL BE YOURS AGAIN.

FAIL AND HE WILL DIE!





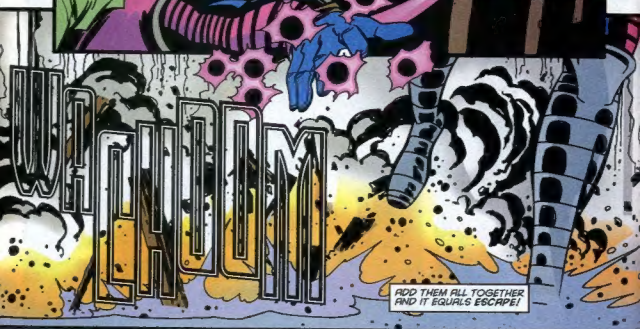
GIFT,
CURSE, SPLIT TH'
DIFFERENCE...

WACHOOOM!

A HANDFUL OF
CHARGED BALL
BEARINGS.

A CONSTRUCTION
TUNNEL SUPPORTED
BY WOODEN STRUTS.

WET RIVERBANK DIRT
JUST BEGGING TO
COLLAPSE.



ADD THEM ALL TOGETHER
AND IT EQUALS ESCAPE!



THAT PRESUMPTUOUS,
ARROGANT...

YOU
FANCY
HIM, DON'T
YOU?

I WOULD
CERTAINLY LIKE
TO RAVAGE HIM...
BEFORE RAVAGING HIM...



A RACE IS IT, THEN?
TO AMERICA AND
THE SECRETS OF
TOMORROW!

AND WHO WILL
GET THERE
FIRST?



EDITOR'S NOTE:

Confused? Baffled? Bewildered? You're probably wondering how Gambit can be back in 1891 and here in the present fighting Apocalypse. That's because this story (GAMBIT #12-14) takes place between X-MEN #98 and UNCANNY X-MEN #379. So, enjoy Gambit in both of these fine stories. In the meantime, take a look here at the Cajun's next two covers and be back next month for our regular letters page.

DEALER'S CHOICE

GAMBIT 13

**NEXT ISSUE
GAMBIT AND COURIER
CONTINUE THEIR CROSS-TIME
ADVENTURE AS THEY MAKE THEIR
WAY TO 19TH CENTURY NEW YORK
CITY! DEEP BENEATH THE STREETS
OF MANHATTAN THEY UNCOVER
SOME "SINISTER" SECRETS
ABOUT CANDRA AND HER
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE
THIEVES GUILD.**

**BY FABIAN NICIEZA,
ANTHONY WILLIAMS &
ANDY LANNING
COVER BY KEVIN MAGUIRE**



GAMBIT 14

**THEN, IN THE
CONCLUSION TO
"SUNSET DAWN", GAMBIT &
CO. RACE TO EGYPT TO SAVE
THE THIEVES' GUILD AND STOP
CANDRA
FROM BRINGING ABOUT
AN "APOCALYPTIC"
CATASTROPHE! GAMBIT
FACES A DIFFICULT DECISION
WITH THE FATE OF HIS
FAMILY AT STAKE!**

**BY FABIAN NICIEZA,
ANTHONY WILLIAMS &
ANDY LANNING
COVER BY KEVIN MAGUIRE**

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